THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Details of Import of Edible Oils as well as Palm Oil during the last five years is given in the table below:

*(Qty in tonnes)*

| S.I | No | Item | 1999-2000 | 2000-01 | 2001-02 | 2002-03 | 2003-04 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | 4177170 | 4321830 | 4365033 | 5290296 |
| 2 | | | | 3054923 | 2733119 | 3052625 | 4026436 |

*(Value in Rs. lakhs)*

| SI. | No | Item | 1999-2000 | 2000-01 | 2001-02 | 2002-03 | 2003-04 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | Edible | 8046054 | 597653.4 | 646496 9 | 877963.6 | 1168324.5 |
| 2 | | Oil Palm | 5291609 | 4071526 | 375521 9 | 5892584 | 841842.1 |

(b) and (c) The Palm Oil falls under heading 1511 and Tariff rate on Palm Oils is 100% Crude Palm Oil and its fractions attract customs duty of 80% subject to actual user condition and Palm Oils other than Crude Palm Oil attract customs duty of 90% Customs duties on crude palm oil and its fractions was increased from 65% to 80% and Palm Oils other than crude palm oils from 75% to 90% *we f.* 15th February, 2005. These rates are quite high and can hardly be considered as concessional rates

(d) and (e) There has been a continuous excess of demand over domestic supply of edible oils, import of edible oils has been resorted to more than two decades to make this item of mass consumption easily available to consumers at reasonable prices As per extant EXIM Policy, import of edible oils except coconut oil is under Open General Licence (OGL) Import of Crude Vegetable Oils of edible grade including Crude Palm Oil not only entourages idle capacity utilization of the domestic Edible Oil Industry but also favours value addition in the country.

**FDI in construction sector**

1561 SHRIMATIAMBIKASONI
DR T SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is examining question of permitting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in construction sector and is holding wide-range consultations with various stakeholders;

(b) if so whether Government is reconsidering as to what is best for FDI in construction sector;

(c) whether presently 100 per cent FDI is permitted in integrated townships, although real estate industry has long been demanding foreign investment in all types of reality projects;

(d) whether industry is also seeking relaxation of 100 acre norm for integrated township; and

(e) by what time final decision for permitting Foreign Direct Investment in construction sector is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (e) The Government has *vide* Press Note 2 (2005 series) allowed Foreign Direct Investment up-to 100% under the automatic route for development of townships, housing, built-up infrastructure and construction-development projects. As per the revised guidelines, the minimum area to be developed under each project in case of development of serviced housing plots would be 10 hectares and for construction-development projects, 50,000 sq.m. This is aimed at accelerating the growth of the construction sector, which would have a multiplier effect on the economy by encouraging construction activities of all types, improving infrastructure and lead-to spin off benefits to manufacturing sector, particularly construction material industries like cement, steel and brick-making. Prior to the Press Note 2 (2005 Series), FDI upto 100% was allowed for development of integrated township subject to guidelines issued *vide* Press Note 3 (2003 series).

**Changes in the Patent Law**

1562. SHRI RAVULACHANDRASEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has brought out certain changes in the Patent Law;

(b) if so, the reaction of the traders; and

(c) the benefits the general public will get out of K?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) The Patents